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Victory for Librarians, EPA Library Funding

After considerable pressure by librarians, researchers and the public, Congress has ordered the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to restore its library network. In the fiscal year (FY) 2008 Interior Appropriations bill, the Senate Appropriations Committee orders EPA to reopen the closed libraries. Last year, EPA closed its Headquarters Library in Washington, DC, to visitors and walk-in patrons. EPA also closed several regional libraries, the toxics and pesticides library and the Ft. Meade Environmental Science Center Library.

The language reads

“\$2,000,000 shall be used to restore the network of EPA libraries recently closed or consolidated by the administration. While the Committee approves of efforts to make environmental data collections available electronically, the Committee does not agree to further library closures or consolidations without evidence of how the public would be served by these changes. Therefore, the Committee expects the EPA to restore publicly available library facilities in each region. EPA is directed to submit a plan on how it will use this funding increase to reopen facilities and maintain a robust collection of environmental data and resources in each region by December 31, 2007.”

The bill is now headed to the full Senate for consideration. The House-passed FY 2008 Interior Appropriations bill doesn't contain the EPA library language.



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